

Notice of Allowability

Application No.

09/809,145

Examiner

Matthew S. Gart

Applicant(s)

COOMBER ET AL.

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to Examiner's Amendment (6/23/2006) and Remarks (6/1/2006).
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 1, 5-7, 9-10, 12-13, 17-19, 21-22, 36-37, 39-40.
3. ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
 1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.

THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

4. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
 5. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
 - (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
 - 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
 - (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
6. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. ☒ Information Disclosure Statements (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08),
Paper No./Mail Date 5/18/2004
4. ☐ Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit
of Biological Material
5. ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6. ☒ Interview Summary (PTO-413),
Paper No./Mail Date 6/23/6
7. ☒ Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. ☒ Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. ☐ Other _____

Matthew S. Gart
Primary Examiner

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Daniel R. Alexander (Ph. 864-503-1372) on June 23, 2006.

The application has been amended as follows:

In the Title

The title has been changed to read as follows:

--Method of providing project and product information to a purchaser of floor covering materials--

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In the Claims

1. (Currently Amended) A method of providing project and product information to a corporate purchaser of floor covering materials using an internet-based Web site system, the method comprising:

providing a Web site system that includes a Web site accessible through a computer based server that includes a link to a customer specific URL and that includes an accessible database containing data including a catalog of project and product data corresponding to floor covering installation projects for said corporate purchaser of floor covering materials;

identifying one or more users authorized to access the Web site of the Web site system on behalf of said corporate purchaser of floor covering materials;

assigning to said one or more users personalized registration information in said database;

establishing a category based listing of data elements accessible by each of said one or more users in said database;

in response to an entry of personalized registration information from a remote computing device by an individual user, linking said individual user to said customer specific URL by system software;

receiving a request for floor covering installation project data from said individual user from the remote computing device;

correlating the entered registration information to the listing of data elements accessible by said individual user by system software;

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retrieving a portion of the requested project data corresponding to the listing of data elements accessible by said individual user from said database; and

transmitting to said remote computing device of the individual user in electronic format said portion of the requested project data corresponding to the listing of data elements accessible by said individual user while excluding data elements not accessible by said individual user, wherein said corporate purchaser of floor covering materials is a corporate entity having a plurality of business locations, wherein the catalog of project and product data includes data on any active floor covering installation projects, wherein the catalog of project and product data includes data on any completed floor covering installation projects, and wherein the customer specific URL further includes a link to an order page for said individual user to place an order with a manufacturer of said floor covering materials by a remote computing device [(.)] , and wherein the order page is linked to a listing of floor covering materials preauthorized by said corporate purchaser of floor covering materials such that the order placed by the individual user is limited to such preauthorized floor covering materials.

2. - 4. (Canceled)

5. (Original) The method as recited in claim 1, wherein in the “establishing” step, the category based listing of data elements accessible by

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each of said one or more users is arranged on the basis of geographic location of the floor covering installation projects.

6. (Currently Amended) The method as recited in claim 1, further comprising updating project data during the progression of the floor covering installation projects by entry of additional information into a database specific to said corporate purchaser of floor covering materials.

7. (Currently Amended) The method as recited in claim 6, wherein entry of additional information into the database specific to said corporate purchaser of floor covering materials is carried out by means of a remote data entry system by a representative of a manufacturer of said floor covering material.

8. (Canceled)

9. (Original) The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the customer specific URL further includes a link to means to request quotations for new floor covering installations.

10. (Original) The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the customer specific URL further includes a link to a contact page for said individual user to

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communicate information or messages to a manufacturer of said floor covering materials.

11. (Canceled)

12. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the Web site system is provided by a manufacturer of floor covering materials.

13. (Currently Amended) A method of providing project and product information to a corporate purchaser of floor covering materials using an internet-based Web site system, the method comprising:

providing a Web site system that includes a Web site accessible through a computer based server that includes a link to a customer specific URL and that includes an accessible database containing data including a catalog of project and product data corresponding to floor covering installation projects for said corporate purchaser of floor covering materials, wherein the Web site is provided by ~~the~~ a manufacturer of said floor covering materials and wherein said floor covering materials are selected from ~~the~~ a group consisting of carpet and carpet tile;

the corporate purchaser and the manufacturer of said floor covering materials identifying one or more users authorized to access the Web site system on behalf of said purchaser;

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assigning to said one or more users a personalized registration code and ID;

establishing a listing of data elements from said database accessible by each of said one or more users;

in response to an entry of a personalized registration code and ID by an individual user via a remote computing device, linking said individual user to said customer specific URL;

receiving a request for floor covering installation project data from said individual user;

correlating the entered registration code and ID to the listing of data elements accessible by said individual user;

retrieving a portion of the requested project data corresponding to the listing of data elements accessible by said individual user; and

transmitting to said individual user in electronic format said portion of the requested project data corresponding to the listing of data elements accessible by said individual user while excluding data elements not accessible by said individual user, wherein said corporate purchaser of floor covering materials is a corporate entity having a plurality of business locations, wherein the catalog of project and product data includes data on any active floor covering installation projects, wherein the catalog of project and product data includes data on any completed floor covering installation projects, and wherein the customer specific URL further includes a link to an order page for said individual user to place an order with the manufacturer of said floor covering materials by a remote

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computing device [[.]] , and wherein the order page is linked to a listing of floor covering materials preauthorized by said corporate purchaser of floor covering materials such that the order placed by the individual user is limited to such preauthorized floor covering materials.

14. – 16. (Canceled)

17. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in claim 13, wherein in the “establishing” step, the listing of data elements accessible by each of said one or more users is arranged on the basis of geographic location of the floor covering installation projects.

18. (Original) The method as recited in claim 13, further comprising updating project data during the progression of the floor covering installation projects by entry of additional information into a database specific to said purchaser of floor covering materials.

19. (Currently Amended) The method as recited in claim 18, wherein entry of additional information into the database specific to said corporate purchaser of floor covering materials is carried out by means of a remote data entry system by a representative of the manufacturer of said floor covering materials.

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20. (Canceled)

21. (Original) The method as recited in claim 13, wherein the customer specific URL further includes a link to means to submit directly to the manufacturer of said floor covering materials a request for quotation (RFQ) for new floor covering installations.

22. (Original) The method as recited in claim 13, wherein the customer specific URL further includes a link to a contact page for said individual user to communicate information or messages to the manufacturer of said floor covering materials.

23. – 35. (Canceled)

36. (Currently Amended) The method as recited in claim 1 35, wherein the listing of floor covering materials preauthorized by said corporate purchaser is a user specific listing such that different floor covering materials are preauthorized for order by different individual users.

37. (Currently Amended) The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the system further generates invoicing and collection data for said corporate purchaser of floor covering materials.

38. (Canceled)

39. (Currently Amended) The method as recited in claim 13 38, wherein the listing of floor covering materials preauthorized by said corporate purchaser is a user specific listing such that different floor covering materials are preauthorized for order by different individual users.

40. (Currently Amended) The method as recited in claim 13, wherein the system further generates invoicing and collection data for said corporate purchaser of floor covering materials.

REASONS FOR ALLOWANCE

The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

Regarding Independent claims 1 and 13

The prior art of record neither anticipates nor fairly and reasonably teaches a method of providing project and product information to a corporate purchaser of floor covering materials using an internet-based Web site system, *inter alia*, the method comprising:

identifying one or more users authorized to access the Web site of the Web site system on behalf of said corporate purchaser of floor covering materials, wherein said corporate purchaser of floor covering materials is a corporate entity having a plurality of business locations; and

in response to an entry of personalized registration information from a remote computing device by an individual user, linking said individual user to said customer specific URL by system software, wherein the customer specific URL further includes a link to an order page for said individual user to place an order with a manufacturer of said floor covering materials by a remote computing device, and wherein the order page is linked to a listing of floor covering materials preauthorized by said corporate purchaser of floor covering materials such that the order placed by the individual user is limited to such preauthorized floor covering materials.

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The most remarkable prior art of record is to Thompson (U.S. Patent No. 6,393,410). Thompson discloses a secure web-based method and system for communicating and managing project information. The method allows for storing project-related information including project documentation in a database. The method allows for posting over a global communications network to selected project participants a plurality of project tasks. Thompson does not expressly disclose a secure web-based method and system for communicating and managing project information wherein said project participants are corporate purchasers of floor covering materials, wherein said corporate purchaser of floor covering materials is a corporate entity having a plurality of business locations, and wherein an order page is linked to a listing of floor covering materials preauthorized by said corporate purchaser of floor covering materials such that the order placed by the individual user is limited to such preauthorized floor covering materials. Moreover, none of the prior art of record remedies the deficiencies found in Thompson.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

EXAMINER COMMENTS

Information Disclosure Statement

The information disclosure statement (IDS) submitted on 5/18/2004 has been considered by the Examiner.

CONCLUSION

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

"Yesterday's lessons, today's advanced tools, tomorrow's business success," Laurent Dubernais, Buildings, Cedar Rapids, June 2001, Vol. 95, Issue 6, 1 page, discloses the state of project management software in the construction industry.

Pub-No JP408030677A, Kumashira, Junji, February 2, 1996, discloses a method for project management processing.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Matthew S. Gart whose telephone number is 571-273-3955. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F, 9-6.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Jeff Smith can be reached on 571-272-6763. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



MSG
Primary Examiner
June 23, 2006